

at least one client, connected to said server via a network, which takes out a predetermined component development data from said storage unit via said network.

2. (TWICE AMENDED) A component development management device comprising:
a storage unit storing hardware and firmware development, including manufacture and inspection, data generated to constitute a product, as a component development knowledge data base, wherein said hardware and said firmware development data constituting said product are at the same management level; and

a management unit managing the component development knowledge data base by controlling when a client takes out the hardware and firmware development data as component development data from said storage unit via a network.

3. (ONCE AMENDED) The component development management device according to claim 2, wherein said hardware and firmware development data as a plurality of component development data constitute a hierarchical structure and said storage unit stores meta-information expressing the hierarchical structure and said client takes out a desired component development data from said plurality of component development data constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta information.

4. (ONCE AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein the meta-information comprises taking-out limiting information related to the permission/non-permission of taking-out for each component development data, and wherein said client takes out the applicable component development data based on the taking-out limiting information only when said client gets the permission.

5. (ONCE AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said component development data comprises patch information for automatically performing a patch processing to a firmware, and wherein said client performs the patch processing to the applicable firmware based on the patch information.

6. (ONCE AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said client retrieves a desired component development data based on the meta-information.

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7. (ONCE AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit sends a notice of revision to said client via said network when a component development data already stored in said storage unit is revised and sends a notice of new registration to said client via said network when a new component development data is registered in said storage unit, and wherein said client takes out said component development data at an arbitrary timing after said client receives the notice of revision or the notice of new registration.

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10. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer-readable recording medium for recording a component development management program for making a computer execute:
storing hardware and firmware development, including manufacture and inspection, data generated to constitute a product, as a component development knowledge data base, wherein said hardware and said firmware development data constituting said product are at a same management level; and
managing the component development knowledge data base by controlling when a client takes out the hardware and firmware development data as component development data from said storage unit via a network.

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11. (NEW) A component development knowledge system, comprising:
a programmed computer processor generating, storing and managing meta information treating at same management level varyingly managed component development data generated to constitute a product.

12. (NEW) The component development management system of claim 1, wherein the component development knowledge database is Extensible Markup Language (XML) data.

13. (NEW) The component development management system of claim 1, wherein the hardware and firmware development data is stored according to a numbering system common to both the hardware and the firmware development data and added to each hardware and firmware development data.

14. (NEW) The component development management system of claim 13, wherein patch information of each firmware development data is included as a subclass in the numbering system.